



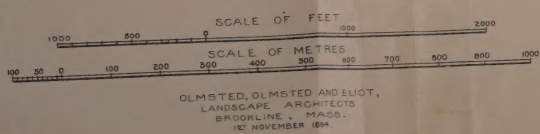






CITY OF CAMBRIDGE — PARK COMMISSION  
HENRY D. YERXA, CHAIRMAN, JOHN O'BRIEN, GEORGE H. COX, COMMISSIONERS  
L. M. HASTINGS, CITY ENGINEER.

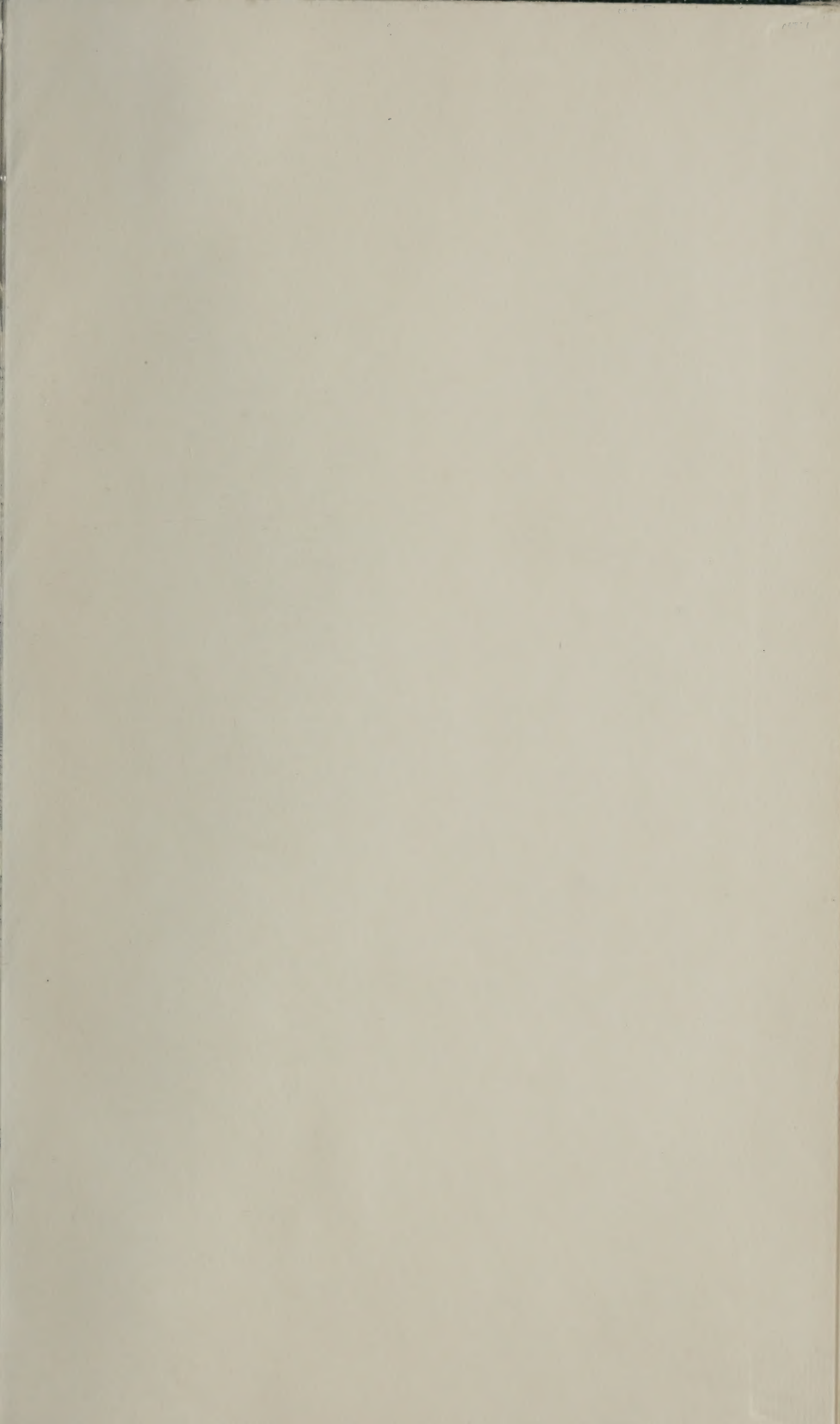
GENERAL PLAN  
SHOWING EXISTING AND PROPOSED  
**PUBLIC RIVERSIDE RESERVATIONS**  
ON THE BANKS OF  
**CHARLES RIVER**  
BETWEEN THE CAMBRIDGE HOSPITAL AND CRAIGIE'S BRIDGE  
AS THE SAME MAY BE ARRANGED IF A DAM IS BUILT AT CHARLESBANK.



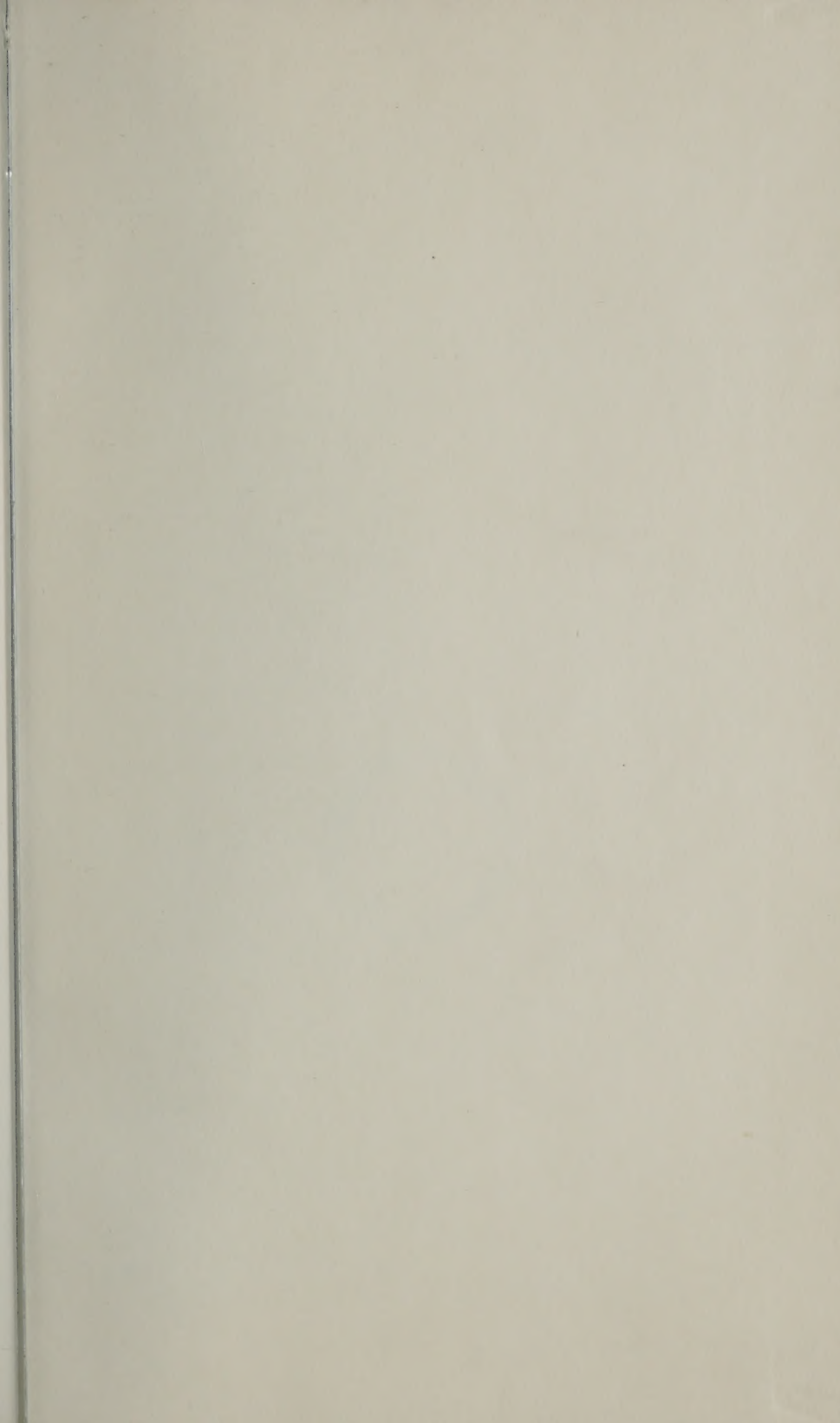
NOTE The Cambridge Park Commission is acquiring the North Bank of the River from Cambridge Hospital to West Boston Bridge, also The Front.  
The Boston Park Commission has built Charlesbank and will doubtless eventually extend the embankment to Cottage Farm, whether new building land is filled for sale or not.  
The Metropolitan Park Commission may be expected to acquire the Brighton bank between North Harvard St. and Cambridge St.  
Harvard University owns Soldiers Field and Longfellow Meadow and may be expected to consent to the building of a River Bank Road.







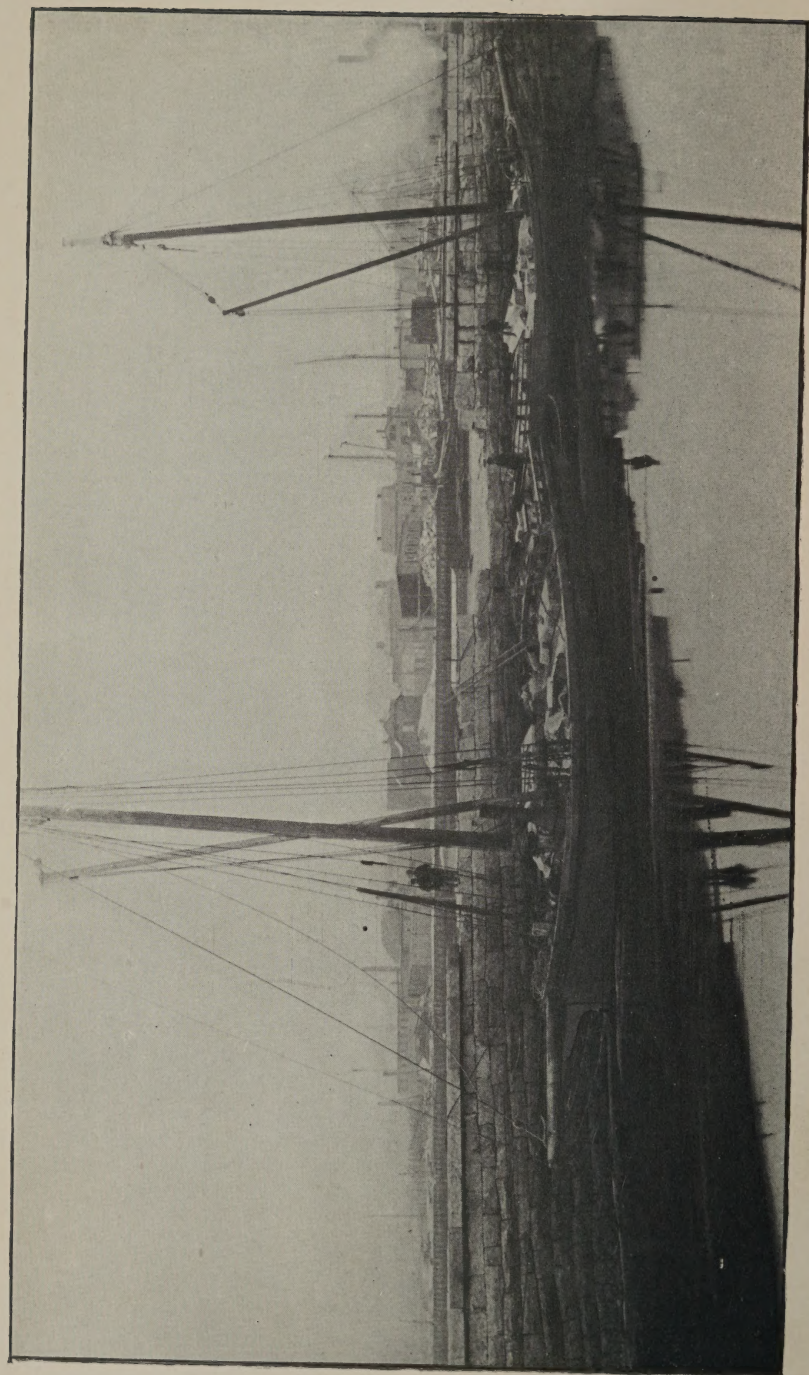












Building Sea Wall at "The Front."



C.R.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

PARK DEPARTMENT

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ANNUAL REPORTS

FOR THE YEAR 1895



PRINTED FOR THE DEPARTMENT

44900







THIRD ANNUAL REPORT  
OF THE  
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS  
OF THE  
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE.

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*To the Honorable, the City Council, of the City of Cambridge:*

GENTLEMEN:—The Board of Park Commissioners have the honor to submit herewith their third annual report for the year ending November 30, 1895, and also the second annual report of the General Superintendent of Parks, as required by Section 4 of the Ordinance establishing a Park Department.

On January 10, 1895, the Board submitted the following report and recommendations:—

JANUARY 10, 1895.

*To the Honorable, the City Council, of the City of Cambridge:*

GENTLEMEN:—The City having taken the shore property of the Cambridge Casino for the proposed River Parkway, the balance of their property bordering on Mt. Auburn street, containing about one and a quarter acres of land, is now offered to the City for park purposes upon very reasonable terms.

This property is beautifully located on the bend in the river near the foot of Longfellow Park, and commands an uninterrupted view of the river to Mt. Auburn, and over the Longfellow marshes to the hills beyond. A large portion of it is already filled, graded and sodded, and upon it are three of the huge willows so often mentioned by Lowell. The usefulness of such a park in this section of our city is plainly apparent, and its attractiveness and value to the city does not need argument to prove; therefore, the Commissioners unanimously recommend to the City Council that the City take, under the authority granted by Chapter 341 of the Acts of 1892, entitled "An Act to authorize the City of Cambridge to lay out and maintain public parks," and Chapter 337 of the Acts of 1893 amendatory thereto, the parcel of land situated on the southerly side of Mt. Auburn street, described as follows:—

Beginning at a point in the southerly line of Mt. Auburn street

at its intersection with the northwesterly line of Bath street, thence in a generally southwesterly direction along and bounding on the northwesterly line of Bath street 355.8 feet to the tangent point of a curve, thence southwesterly and westerly along said curve of 20 feet radius about 49 feet to the other tangent point of said curve at a point in the northeasterly boundary line of land taken for the Charles River Parkway, described in an order of the Board of Aldermen of the City of Cambridge, approved January 25th, 1894, thence northwesterly along said northeasterly line of Parkway about 122 feet to the tangent point of a curve, thence northwesterly and northerly along said curve of 80 feet radius about 79 feet to its other tangent point, thence northerly along the easterly boundary line of said Parkway 162.9 feet to the southerly line of Mt. Auburn street,—thence easterly along and bounding on said southerly line of Mt. Auburn street 355.4 feet to its intersection with the northwesterly line of Bath street at the point of beginning. Containing 55,500 square feet.

Respectfully,

H. D. YERNA,  
GEO. HOWLAND COX,  
JOHN O'BRIEN.

The following order for taking the land recommended in above report was adopted by both branches of the City Council, March 5, 1895, and approved by the Mayor, March 6, 1895:—

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, }  
IN BOARD OF ALDERMEN, March 5, 1895. }

WHEREAS, By Chapter 341 of the Acts of the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the year 1892, entitled "An Act to authorize the City of Cambridge to lay out and maintain public parks," and accepted by the City of Cambridge, by a resolve approved June 15, 1892, and by Chapter 337 of the Acts of the Legislature for the year 1893, amendatory of said Chapter 341, it is provided that said City "by its City Council at any time after the passage of said Act, may take and hold, by purchase or otherwise, any and all real estate and lands within said City as it may deem advisable, upon recommendation of the Board of Park Commissioners hereinafter mentioned, and may lay out and maintain and improve the same as a public park or parks," and

WHEREAS, It is deemed advisable upon the recommendation of said Board of Park Commissioners that the City should, under the provisions of the aforesaid Acts, take and hold for the purpose of improving the same as a public park or parks, the lot or parcel of land hereinafter bounded and described, and

WHEREAS, "An appropriation sufficient to cover the estimated expense thereof" has been duly made by the City Council, as required by Section 3 of the aforesaid Chapter 337 of the Acts of the Legislature of 1893.



Now, therefore, be it known, that by virtue and in pursuance of the authority conferred by said Acts of the Legislature, and by every other power and authority it hereto enabling, the City of Cambridge, by its City Council, does hereby take for the purpose aforesaid the following described lot or parcel of land, situated within the limits of said City, to wit,—

All that parcel of land known as the property of the Cambridge Casino, situated on the southerly side of Mt. Auburn street and described as follows :—

Beginning at a point in the southerly line of Mt. Auburn street at its intersection with the northwesterly line of Bath street, thence in a generally southwesterly direction along and bounding on the northwesterly line of Bath street, three-hundred and fifty-three (353) feet to the tangent point of a curve, thence southwesterly and westerly along said curve of twenty (20) feet radius about forty-nine (49) feet to the other tangent point of said curve at a point in the northeasterly boundary line of land taken for the Charles River Parkway described in an order of the Board of Aldermen of the City of Cambridge, approved January 25, 1894, thence northwesterly along said northeasterly line of Parkway about one hundred and twenty-two (122) feet to the tangent point of a curve, thence northwesterly and northerly along said curve of eighty (80) feet radius about seventy-nine (79) feet to its tangent point, thence northerly along the easterly boundary line of said Parkway one hundred and sixty-two and nine tenths (162.9) feet to the southerly line of Mt. Auburn street, thence easterly along and bounding on said southerly line of Mt. Auburn street three hundred and thirty-five and four tenths (335.4) feet to its intersection with the northwesterly line of Bath street at the point of beginning. Containing fifty-five thousand five hundred (55,500) square feet more or less.

So, therefore, be it known that the parcel of land together with all the buildings and structures thereon, hereinbefore mentioned and particularly described, on this fifth day of March, A. D. 1895, is hereby taken by the City of Cambridge as aforesaid, for the purpose hereinbefore set forth, assessments for the cost and expense thereof to be laid under the provisions of Section 6 and 7 of said Chapter 341 of the Acts of 1892; and it is hereby

*Ordered:* — That in accordance with the requirements of Section 2 of said Chapter 341 of the Acts of the year 1892, hereinbefore mentioned, the City Clerk be and hereby is directed to cause to be recorded, in the Registry of Deeds of the Southern District of the County of Middlesex, a description of the aforesaid taking sufficiently accurate for identification, with a statement of the purpose for which the same were taken, which statement shall be signed by the Mayor.

Also, that the City Clerk be requested to send notice of this taking to the owners of record of the land hereby taken.

## I. PARK CONSTRUCTION.

## CAMBRIDGE FIELD.

The development of Cambridge Field has progressed rapidly. The lawns and planting spaces are practically completed, and Willow, Berkshire and York streets have been brought nearly to grade. The curbing around the field has been put in, and the walks are being completed as rapidly as the broken stone is delivered. The playfield will be graded and finished so that it can be used next summer. Plans for the Shelter were submitted by the architects, but were not quite satisfactory to the Commissioners. They have since been redrawn, and it is proposed to advertise for bids and begin the erection of the building early in the spring. The filling required on the field (117,204 cubic yards) has been done entirely by teams instead of by railroad. The saving by so doing is \$30,472.87, and at the same time employment has been given to Cambridge men and Cambridge teams. The cost of the field, including filling, grading, planting, and the building, all complete, will not exceed thirty-five cents per square foot.

Cambridge Field will be completed in 1896, the fiftieth anniversary of the incorporation of the city. It was largely in anticipation of this fact that the field was given its name. The field will thus give emphasis to the newer municipal spirit which now characterizes our people, and will stand for all time as a monument of the public enterprise of this semi-centennial year.

## RINDGE FIELD.

But little work has been done on Rindge Field. It has been used as a playground throughout the summer, and is in fair condition for the purposes required at present.

## RINDGE FIELD NURSERY.

Much might be said in praise of this nursery. Its advantages have been made manifest in the work of the department

planting, both as to trees and shrubs, and in the saving of a large amount of money and time.

#### EAST CAMBRIDGE EMBANKMENT.

The interests of Cambridge seemed to clearly demand the development of the section in the vicinity of the East Cambridge front, by the extension of Commercial avenue and by filling the flats acquired by the city. The Board therefore advertised April 18, 1895, for bids for the construction of 1,759 feet of sea wall. The contract was awarded to Thomas A. Rowe for the sum of \$29.19 per lineal foot, and the wall is now nearly completed.

The report of the City Engineer made to this Board, which we transmit with this report, contains a technical description of the construction of the sea wall. In the execution of this work some unusual engineering difficulties had to be met, and we think that the City Engineer is to be credited with obtaining most satisfactory results.

Commercial avenue has been extended 435 feet, and at the present rate of filling will be carried to the canal by the spring of 1896.

The development of this section is of great importance to Cambridge both from the humanitarian and the industrial standpoint. The people of a congested district will secure a river park, and manufacturers will here find the most favorable sites for business purposes within the vicinity of Boston.

#### RIVER ROAD.

A large amount of filling has been received at points along the river, and work has been done in the construction of the river drive at Magazine, DeWolf and Murray streets.

The Board are now in the midst of a consideration of plans for the work of construction along the River Parkway, which work it is hoped may be commenced and actively prosecuted next season. The accompanying report of the Landscape



'Architects Advisory contains a discussion of the treatment of the river banks, which will indicate the general plan contemplated.

#### BROADWAY PARK.

The following order of the City Council was approved February 6, 1895:—

*Ordered:—* That the Mayor be and is hereby authorized and requested for and in behalf of the City of Cambridge to petition the General Court of this Commonwealth for such legislation as will place all parks and commons now occupied and used, and that may hereafter be established, set apart, occupied and used in said city as a park or common under the care and control of the Park Commissioners of this city, in accordance with the provisions of the Acts of 1892, Chapter 341, and the Acts of 1893, Chapter 337, and the Acts of 1894, Chapter 116, and also for such legislation as will enable the City to use the proceeds of the loans authorized under said Acts and the Acts of 1894, Chapter 89, for the purpose of defraying the cost of reconstruction of such parks and commons now occupied and used and that may hereafter be established, set apart, occupied and used in this city as a park or common, and also generally for such legislation as will enable this city to bring under one system, management, care and control, its present and future commons and parks.

As the result of this petition, the following was enacted by the General Court.

[Chapter 236 of the Acts of 1895.]

An Act to authorize the City of Cambridge to place all parks and commons therein under the care and control of its Park Commissioners, and to provide for expense of the reconstruction of such parks and commons.

*Be it enacted, etc., as follows:—*

SECTION 1. The City of Cambridge, by its City Council, may from time to time place its parks and commons now occupied and used, and that may hereafter be established, set apart, occupied and used in said city as parks, or commons, under the care and control of its Park Commissioners, with all the rights and privileges and subject to all the provisions and regulations contained in Chapter three hundred and forty-one of the Acts of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-two, Chapter three hundred and thirty-seven of the Acts of the year eighteen

hundred and ninety-three, and Chapter one hundred and sixteen of the Acts of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-four.

SECT. 2. The Park Commissioners of said city may reconstruct all such parks and commons as may be placed under their care and control by the City Council under the provision of Section 1 of this Act, and for that purpose may use, as may be necessary, the proceeds of the loans authorized under said chapters and Chapter eighty-nine of the Acts of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-four.

SECT. 3. Sections 1 and 3 of Chapter six of the Acts of the year eighteen hundred and thirty are hereby repealed.

SECT. 4. This Act shall take effect upon its acceptance by the City Council of Cambridge. [*Approved April 6, 1895.*]

The following orders of the City Council were then approved on May 8, 1895.

*Resolved:—*That Chapter 236 of the Acts of the Legislature of this Commonwealth of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-five, being an act entitled “An Act to authorize the City of Cambridge to place all parks and commons therein under the control of its Park Commissioners and to provide for expense of the reconstruction of such parks and commons,” is hereby accepted, in accordance with the provisions of Section 4 of said Act.

*Ordered:—*That the Public Park or Common, in Ward Two, situated between Broadway and Harvard street in this city, — being the same referred to in Chapter 40 of the Resolves of the Legislature of this Commonwealth passed in the year eighteen hundred and sixty-five,—be and is hereby placed under the care and control of the Park Commissioners in accordance with the provisions of Section 2 of Chapter 236 of the Acts of the Legislature of 1895.

Broadway Park has for years been distinctly a resort for small children, and has been very largely used by them. The many walks across it and the poor condition of the turf have detracted much from its usefulness, as well as its appearance. The Commissioners gave instructions to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot to prepare plans that, when carried out, would produce a children's playground in its highest sense.

The plans submitted were approved by the Board, and the work has progressed satisfactorily throughout the summer, and will be completed in 1896.

## II. SQUARES AND PUBLIC GROUNDS.

### DANA SQUARE.

The plans adopted by the Commissioners for the alteration of Dana Square have been carried out, and its appearance is thus very much improved.

### CAMBRIDGE COMMON.

No unusual work has been done on the Common during the past season, on account of its being torn up by the Water Department in carrying the big water pipe through it.

We call attention to the suggestions in the report of the General Superintendent of Parks concerning the future treatment of the Common, and endorse, in the main, the arguments therein contained. The actual work of reconstruction may well be postponed for the present, but plans should be in readiness for the demand which citizens will make for a more rational treatment of this valuable reservation when park areas are completed in other parts of the city.

### PUBLIC GROUNDS.

The usual amount of work has been done around the Public Library and City Hall. The grounds around the Morse School-house have been completed and surrounded by an artificial stone curbing. Similar treatment was given to the small triangle at the junction of Western avenue and Pleasant street.

### SHADE TREES.

The demands upon the Department for shade-tree work are large, but the annual appropriation for this purpose is insufficient to meet all these demands. Consequently the close of each season finds some things undone. Notwithstanding the large amount of tree planting that has been done during the past season, it is a fact that a larger appropriation for the purpose would enable the Department to do better work. The



Board therefore again recommend that the usual appropriation for shade trees and public grounds be increased next year to \$9,000.

### III. FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

During the year, bills have been approved by the Board and certified to the Auditor to the total amount of \$201,215.05.

This amount is divided as follows : —

Park Lands and Construction . . . . .	\$192,716 47
Shade Trees and Public Grounds . . . . .	8,498 58
Total . . . . .	<u>\$201,215 05</u>

These two amounts were expended as follows : —

#### PARK LOAN.

Amount appropriated April 17, 1895 . . . . .	\$348,000 00
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#### EXPENDED.

##### CAMBRIDGE FIELD:

Construction Account . . . . .	\$48,904 42	\$48,904 42
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##### RINDGE FIELD:

Construction Account . . . . .	\$1,016 43	1,016 43
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##### RIVER PARKWAY:

Land Account . . . . .	\$77,364 13	
Construction Account . . . . .	8,416 70	
	<u>          </u>	\$85,780 83

##### THE FRONT:

Land Account . . . . .	\$ 5 00	
Construction Account . . . . .	44,145 35	
	<u>          </u>	\$44,150 35

##### NURSERY:

Construction Account . . . . .	\$516 23	516 23
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##### BROADWAY PARK:

Construction Account . . . . .	\$3,738 95	3,738 95
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##### OFFICE EXPENSES:

. . . . .	\$1,482 47	1,482 47
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##### GENERAL ACCOUNTS:

. . . . .	\$7,126 79	7,126 79
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Total amount expended . . . . .	<u>\$192,716 47</u>
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Balance of appropriation unexpended . . . . .	\$155,283 53
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From the above, it will be seen that the amount expended during the year under the Park Loans was divided as follows :—

Land Account . . . . .	\$ 77,369 13
Construction Account . . . . .	115,347 34
Total . . . . .	<u>\$192,716 47</u>

#### SHADE TREES AND PUBLIC GROUNDS.

Amount appropriated April 17, 1895 . . . . . \$8,500 00

#### EXPENDED.

Maintenance Account . . . . .	\$8,498 53
Balance of appropriation unexpended . . . . .	<u>\$ 1 42</u>

Under the direction of the Board, a detailed classification of the expenditures has been prepared by the General Superintendent and will be found in his report. The following table shows a complete financial statement of the Park Department since its creation, giving the amounts appropriated, the amounts expended, the amounts which lapsed, and also the sources from which the moneys were obtained.

#### TABLE OF APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE BEGINNING.

*Provided by Annual Taxes and Department Revenue.*

Date.	Object.	Amount Appropriated.	Amount Lapsed.	Amount Expended.	Total Amount Expended.
July 11, '93	Experts' Fees and Incidental Expenses.....	\$ 500 00	\$ 160 87	\$ 339 13	
M'ch 12, '94	Shade Trees and Public Grounds. . .	5,502 09	34	5,501 75	
Nov. 21, '94	Revenue from Shade Trees and P. G. . .	17 19		17 19	
Nov. 21, '94	Revenue from Park Lands . . . . .	946 21		946 21	
Nov. 21, '94	Morse Schoolhouse Grounds . . . . .	1,000 00	1,000 00		
Ap'l 17, '95	Interest on Bonds.....	14,400 00	340 00	14,060 00	
Ap'l 17, '95	Sinking Fund Requirements . . . . .	7,200 00		7,200 00	
Ap'l 17, '95	Shade Trees and Public Grounds... .	8,500 00	1 42	8,498 58	\$36,562 86

#### *Provided by Loans.*

Date.	Object.	Amount Appropriated.	Amount Lapsed.	Amount Expended.	
Feb. 28, '94	Land and Construction.....	\$412,000 00	\$161,686 97	\$250,313 03	
Ap'l 17, '95	Land and Construction.....	348,000 00	155,283 53	192,716 47	443,029 50
Total amount expended.....					<u>\$479,592 36</u>

It will be seen by the above table that the total amount expended on account of the Park Department since its creation in 1893, for lands, park construction, "shade trees and public grounds" and schoolhouse grounds, is \$479,592.36. This amount has been obtained as follows:—

From annual tax levies and department revenue . . . . .	\$ 36,562 86
Provided by park loans . . . . .	443,029 50
Total . . . . .	<u>\$479,592 36</u>

Of the \$443,029.50 expended from park loans from the beginning of the work to December 1, 1895, the following is the division made:

<b>CAMBRIDGE FIELD:</b>		
Land Account . . . . .	\$63,820 15	
Construction Account . . . . .	65,447 69	
	<u></u>	\$129,267 84
<b>RINDGE FIELD:</b>		
Land Account . . . . .	\$31,461 85	
Construction Account . . . . .	3,339 77	
	<u></u>	\$34,801 62
<b>RIVER PARKWAY:</b>		
Land Account . . . . .	\$161,707 67	
Construction Account . . . . .	10,675 81	
	<u></u>	\$172,383 48
<b>THE FRONT:</b>		
Land Account . . . . .	\$45,231 40	
Construction Account . . . . .	44,203 35	
	<u></u>	\$89,434 75
<b>NURSERY:</b>		
Construction Account . . . . .	\$1,664 10	1,664 10
<b>BROADWAY PARK:</b>		
Construction Account . . . . .	\$3,738 95	3,738 95
<b>OFFICE EXPENSES:</b>		
. . . . .	\$2,324 12	2,324 12
<b>GENERAL ACCOUNT:</b>		
. . . . .	\$10,360 85	10,360 85
		<u>\$443,975 71</u>
Less Park Revenue for 1894 merged into		
Construction Account . . . . .		946 21
		<u>\$443,029 50</u>

Of the whole amount of park loans expended to December 1, 1895, 68 per cent. has been for land and 32 per cent. for construction, as follows:—



Land Account (less "Revenue") . . . . .	\$301,274 86
Construction Account . . . . .	141,754 64
	<u>\$443,029 50</u>

The following is a list of the bonds which have been sold under the denomination of "Cambridge Park Loan."

DATE.	LEGISLATIVE ACT.	AMOUNT.	TIME.	RATE	SOLD FOR	PREMIUM.
February 1, 1894	{ Chap. 341, Acts 1892 } { Chap. 337, Acts 1893 }	\$250,000 00	30 Years.	4%	\$107 55	\$18,875 00
February 1, 1894	" " " "	110,000 00	30 "	4%	106 89	7,579 00
August 1, 1895	Chap. 89, Acts 1894	100,000 00	40 "	4%	114 38	14,380 00

#### IV. RELATED MATTERS.

##### MAGAZINE STREET BRIDGE.

On November 27, 1895, the following order was approved by the Mayor:—

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, {  
IN BOARD of ALDERMEN, November 26, 1895. }

*Ordered:*—That the Mayor is hereby requested to petition the General Court at its next session, in the name and on behalf of the City of Cambridge, for authority to unite with the City of Boston and the Town of Brookline in the construction of a new bridge across the Charles River from Magazine street in Cambridge to Pleasant street in Boston; the said bridge to be sixty feet in width; to be constructed of iron, upon stone piers; to have a draw and a paved roadway; the cost of said bridge, estimated at the sum of \$300,000, to be paid by the cities of Boston and Cambridge and the Town of Brookline, in such proportion as the General Court shall determine.

It seems probable that the Magazine Street Bridge will be built, and at this time the Commissioners desire to state their position in relation to it. They believe that the bridge will be of great advantage to the city, and a like convenience to the driving public. Before the final plans for its construction are accepted, they will desire to have them submitted to Olmsted, Olmsted & Eliot, especially in relation to that part which crosses the land taken for park purposes at the foot of Magazine street. A rare opportunity is here given to create a beautiful approach to Cambridge, an ornament to the city, and a source of pride to its citizens. A neglect of this opportunity now, would be a cause for regret ever after.

## BOYLSTON STREET.

The Commissioners in the beginning advocated the widening of Boylston street as a public necessity, and as a part of the general scheme for the River Parkway, and they are still positive in their opinion that the interests of the city demand the establishment of the new lines at an early day. Improvements in that section of the city should no longer be postponed. One hundred dollars spent now will do more for Cambridge than would one thousand dollars spent twenty years later. Improvement and progress go hand-in-hand, and without the one we cannot have the other. It is probable that contracts will be made to complete (during the coming season) that section of the parkway lying between Boylston and Scorgie streets, in which case the necessity for the proposed widening becomes plainly apparent.

On November 6, 1895, the Commissioners sent the following letter as expressing their views upon this question, with the reasons therefor.

November 6, 1895.

*To the Committee on Roads and Bridges.*

GENTLEMEN:—In compliance with a request from a member of your Committee, we now hand to you in writing the views held by the Park Commissioners in reference to the widening of Boylston street. Our original recommendation was to widen on the westerly side to a width of sixty feet. Our reasons for this recommendation were as follows:

First: Economy. Widening on the easterly side would largely increase the cost, and in the judgment of the Commission the possible benefit to be derived from a widening on that side would not compensate for the larger expenditure that would be necessitated by such widening.

Second: A sixty-foot street would make a better approach to the square than a wider one, ending in the brick block on the opposite corner of Brattle square.

Third: A sixty-foot street would make a better business street than a wider one.

Fourth: More valuable property would be left for the purpose of taxation than if a greater widening were adopted.

This was our original recommendation and the reasons therefor, but after further consideration we came to the conclusion that if there must be double tracks on Boylston street, between Harvard square and Eliot street, it was desirable to have the street seventy feet wide rather than sixty, although adhering to our former opinion that the widening should be on the westerly side.

We are now informed that the West End Railway Company have, by a letter, offered to give up their location on Boylston street, between

Harvard square and Eliot street, provided Boylston and Eliot streets are widened to sixty feet and that they are allowed to have double tracks through Eliot street.

We desire especially to call your attention to the objections to double tracks and switches at the corner of Boylston street and Harvard square.

Harvard square is and always will be occupied almost exclusively by the electric cars. Double tracks and switches on Boylston street would, at the junction with the square, make a perfect network of iron for carriages and vehicles of all kinds to cross. Notice, if you will, the double tracks and switches now on Dunster street, and then imagine a similar obstruction to travel at the mouth of Boylston street. It would certainly be an undesirable condition of things in any case, but consider further the greater number of cars standing and in motion at this latter point, the confusion arising from the ringing of gongs, the tide of pleasure and business travel from so many important thoroughfares centering at this point, the multitude of pedestrians always gathered here, and you have not only the cause of a great inconvenience to the general public but a combination of perils to life and limb nowhere else to be found in our city.

But, happily, all this may be avoided. With the tracks removed entirely from this part of Boylston street, the tide of travel would sweep straight across Harvard square, and the danger to property and persons would be reduced to its minimum.

Believing that a street sixty feet wide, without tracks, is vastly better than one seventy feet wide with such a network of rails as must necessarily exist in case of double tracks, we most earnestly recommend the acceptance of the offer of the West End Street Railway and the widening of Boylston street to sixty feet on the westerly side. We believe such a solution of this vexing problem would be the crowning triumph of all plans heretofore suggested, and would result in benefits to public travel, business and taxable values, which would compensate the public for their long waiting.

Respectfully yours,

H. D. YERXA,  
GEORGE HOWLAND COX,  
JOHN O'BRIEN.

During the year the work of completing the organization of the department has received the careful consideration of the Board, and it is believed that the department is now well equipped to carry on the work of construction with intelligent economy. We commend the faithful services of the employees of this department during the past year.

Respectfully submitted,

HENRY D. YERXA,  
JOHN O'BRIEN,  
GEO. HOWLAND COX.



REPORT  
OF THE  
GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT OF PARKS.

CAMBRIDGE, December 1st, 1895.

To the Board of Park Commissioners of the City of Cambridge:

GENTLEMEN: — I have the honor to present my second annual report as General Superintendent of Parks, covering the financial year 1895.

The expenses of the Department for the year are shown in the following summary of the departmental accounts:

PARK LOANS.

Amount appropriated April 17, 1895 . . . . . \$348,000 00

EXPENDED.

CAMBRIDGE FIELD.

Pay Roll . . . . .	\$11,878 40	
Teaming . . . . .	2,086 02	
Filling Material . . . . .	18,963 30	
Work on Catch Basin . . . . .	3 87	
Loam . . . . .	9,554 24	
Sod . . . . .	321 61	
Grass Seed . . . . .	34 75	
Manure . . . . .	482 00	
Edgestone . . . . .	656 10	
Lumber . . . . .	79 31	
Paving Brick . . . . .	846 60	
Sand . . . . .	1 00	
Laying Water Pipe . . . . .	127 06	
Lawn Seats . . . . .	197 20	
Wooden Conduit . . . . .	42 00	
Fence Poles . . . . .	40 00	
Tools and Hardware . . . . .	49 20	
Printing and Advertising . . . . .	47 35	
Coal . . . . .	16 20	
Cutting Stone . . . . .	2 25	
Amounts carried forward . . . . .	\$45,428 46	\$348,000 00

<i>Amounts brought forward</i>	\$45,428 46	\$348,000 00
Oil	2 95	
Laying Brick Pavement	583 25	
Carpentering	10 00	
Engineering Pay Roll	517 16	
Gravel	224 00	
Shrubs	1,002 57	
Freight Bills	13 51	
Expressing	8 06	
Sewer Bricks	29 23	
Engineers' Stakes	19 00	
Iron Sewer Pipe	66 61	
Stone	2 00	
Cracked Stone	349 15	
Water Works Supplies and Labor	648 47	
	<hr/>	\$48,904 42

## RINDGE FIELD.

Pay Roll	\$502 06	
Teaming	12 00	
Sewer Work	154 78	
Fence	179 64	
Loam	2 00	
Water Works Supplies and Labor	131 09	
Painting Fence	34 86	
	<hr/>	\$ 1,016 43

## RIVER PARKWAY.

Pay Roll	\$ 1,475 92	
Engineering Pay Roll	493 36	
Filling Material	5,315 41	
Teaming	3 00	
Lands	76,911 13	
Registering Deeds	23 19	
Examination of Titles	253 00	
Insurance	104 00	
Lumber	9 32	
Tools and Hardware	2 22	
Printing	14 00	
Labor on Raft	1 00	
Repairs at Sargent's Wharf	838 40	
Repairs at Winthrop Wharf Office	99 50	
Fences	37 38	
Land Expert's Fees	200 00	
	<hr/>	\$85,780 83

## THE FRONT.

Pay Roll	\$1,825 33	
Engineering Pay Roll	640 90	
<i>Amounts carried forward</i>	\$2,466 23	\$135,701 68 \$348,000 00

## PARK DEPARTMENT.

19

<i>Amounts brought forward</i>	.	.	\$ 2,466 23	\$135,701 68	\$348,000 00
Printing	.	.	95 77		
Sea Wall	.	.	39,037 60		
Examination of Title	.	.	5 00		
Driving Extra Piles	.	.	12 00		
Lumber	.	.	66 16		
Dredging	.	.	200 00		
Filling Material	.	.	1,987 05		
Teaming	.	.	139 50		
Recording License	.	.	1 52		
Stove and Fittings	.	.	12 60		
House and Locker	.	.	120 00		
Oil	.	.	4 19		
Coal	.	.	2 73		
			<hr/>	\$44,150 35	

## NURSERY.

Fence	.	.	.	.	.	\$ 94 88
Shrubs	.	.	.	.	.	226 00
Pay Roll	.	.	.	.	.	170 00
Freight Bills	.	.	.	.	.	2 12
Teaming	.	.	.	.	.	7 88
Expressing	.	.	.	.	.	15 35
						<hr/>
						\$ 516 23

## OFFICE EXPENSES.

Salary of Bookkeeper	.	.	.	.	\$310 00
Salary of Stenographer	.	.	.	.	626 00
Stationery and Printing	.	.	.	.	276 97
Stamps	.	.	.	.	4 10
Books	.	.	.	.	20 10
Furniture	.	.	.	.	99 99
Postage Stamps	.	.	.	.	35 00
Extra Clerical Service	.	.	.	.	22 50
Telephone Rent	.	.	.	.	46 50
Boxes	.	.	.	.	6 90
Maps	.	.	.	.	15 00
Pamphlet Cases	.	.	.	.	16 20
Carpentering	.	.	.	.	3 21
					<hr/>
					\$ 1,482 47

## BROADWAY PARK.

Pay Roll	.	.	.	.	.	\$1,275 94
Engineering Pay Roll	.	.	.	.	.	45 15
Teaming	.	.	.	.	.	36 13
Flagstaff	.	.	.	.	.	267 40
Loam	.	.	.	.	.	790 01
Wire and Staples	.	.	.	.	.	10 70
Fence Poles	.	.	.	.	.	15 00
						<hr/>
<i>Amounts carried forward</i>	.	.	.	.	.	\$2,440 33
						<hr/>
						\$181,850 73
						<hr/>
						\$348,000 00



<i>Amounts brought forward</i> . . .	\$2,440 33	\$181,850 73	\$348,000 00
Sod . . . . .	264 55		
Fences . . . . .	496 11		
Shrubs . . . . .	338 05		
Freight Bills . . . . .	3 30		
Water Works Supplies and Labor	196 61		
		\$ 3,738 95	

## GENERAL ACCOUNT.

Salary of General Superintendent	\$1,791 62		
Landscape Architects' Fees to 1895	1,988 88		
Landscape Architects' Fees, 1895	603 53		
Board of Horse, Horse Hire, etc.	389 75		
Engineering Stakes . . . . .	68 24		
Engineering Supplies . . . . .	55 65		
Tools and Hardware . . . . .	650 33		
Manure . . . . .	155 43		
Printing . . . . .	530 17		
Photographs . . . . .	4 50		
Rubber Goods . . . . .	25 83		
Expressing . . . . .	1 45		
Carriage Repairs . . . . .	21 75		
Typewriting . . . . .	8 25		
Stenographer's Work at State House . . . . .	108 86		
Car Tickets for Department . . . . .	65 00		
Car Tickets for Engineers . . . . .	125 00		
Land Expert's Fees . . . . .	50 00		
Sign Boards . . . . .	89 80		
Lawn Sprinklers . . . . .	13 65		
Lumber . . . . .	42 55		
Carpentering . . . . .	10 14		
Rent of Storeroom . . . . .	70 00		
Engineering Pay Roll . . . . .	35 15		
Pay Roll . . . . .	69 18		
Tool Houses . . . . .	119 00		
Subscription, "Garden and Forest"	4 00		
Boat and Fittings . . . . .	28 20		
Telegraph . . . . .	88		
		\$ 7,126 79	
			\$192,716 47
Balance unexpended . . . . .			\$155,283 53

## SHADE TREES AND PUBLIC GROUNDS.

Appropriation, April 17, 1895 . . . . .	\$8,500 00
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## EXPENDITURES.

Pay Roll . . . . .	\$5,385 36	
Teaming . . . . .	483 38	
Gun Carriages . . . . .	107 00	
<i>Amounts carried forward</i> . . . . .	\$5,975 74	\$8,500 00

<i>Amounts brought forward</i> . . . . .	\$5,975 74	\$8,500 00
Manure . . . . .	159 25	
Stone Dust . . . . .	30 55	
Wire Netting . . . . .	770 90	
Tools and Hardware . . . . .	102 21	
Horse Shoeing . . . . .	14 75	
Hoisting and repairing Topmasts . . . . .	40 25	
Coal Tar . . . . .	3 75	
Gravel . . . . .	11 55	
Trees and Shrubs . . . . .	205 85	
Signs . . . . .	3 85	
Grass Seed . . . . .	18 40	
Artificial Stone Coping . . . . .	574 77	
Painting Fence, Hastings Square . . . . .	20 00	
Bulbs and Plants . . . . .	142 85	
Decorating Washington Elm . . . . .	18 00	
Stone Chips . . . . .	36 25	
Paving Brick . . . . .	146 80	
Ladder . . . . .	10 50	
Board of Horse . . . . .	130 00	
Sharpening Tools . . . . .	10 90	
Lumber . . . . .	32 41	
Harness Repairs . . . . .	7 65	
Damage Claims caused by Trees . . . . .	12 25	
Drag . . . . .	19 15	
	<hr/>	\$8,498 58
Balance unexpended . . . . .		\$1 42

## CAMBRIDGE FIELD.

The amounts expended upon Cambridge Field from the beginning of the work to the present date have been :—

Land Account . . . . .	\$63,820 15
Construction Account . . . . .	65,447 69
	<hr/>
Total to date . . . . .	\$129,267 84

The area of this entire reservation is 550,635.85 square feet. This brings the cost of this park at the present time to (approximately) 23½ cents per square foot. The nearest park in location of a similar character—that is, a reservation of nearly the same area, in a populous district, and devoted, largely, to playgrounds—is The Charlesbank in Boston. This latter park has cost (approximately) \$1.50 per square foot.

The work upon Cambridge Field has been carried on with as much despatch as the conditions would permit. Filling material and loam have been placed as fast as they arrived, but the work of grading has necessarily been slow. The earth for filling to grade, obtained from cellar excavations in Cambridge and the surrounding cities, has been hauled to the field in teams, and to date the number of filling tickets issued is 90,415, each ticket representing a load averaging about thirty-five cubic feet. But little more filling material will be required. The loam has been obtained in many small quantities, as offered, coming from Cambridge, Somerville, Arlington, Belmont, and Brighton. The usual price paid was 90 cents per cubic yard, but considerable quantities were secured at less prices. The total amount paid for loam to date, including both years' work, is \$10,770.29. Very little more loam will be needed. The turf areas are now nearly finished, a small amount of seeding remaining to be done in the spring. The three front plats were sodded, instead of waiting for the slower and less satisfactory process of seeding. Nearly all the shrubbery plantations are finished, and all the trees are planted. The entire systems of water-pipes and sewers are now laid, and the conduits for electric wires are placed from Cambridge street to the site of the Shelter. The edgestones upon the boundary lines of the four streets are now in place.

Temporary wire fences have been erected along the paths to protect the planting spaces, but it is hoped that these may all be removed before the close of another season. The completed field is to be entirely without fences.

The Cambridge street mall has been surfaced with a brick pavement, laid "herring-bone" fashion. The other malls and paths are to be finished in a six-inch macadam. About 6,890 square yards have been laid to date, and there are yet 5,828 square yards to be laid. The delay in completing this portion of the work has been due to the failure of the contractor to furnish cracked stone within the time specified.

Until the cold weather made it uncomfortable, the finished portions of the field have been a popular resort for the families of the neighborhood. Upon summer evenings and Sun-



days, the walks have often been crowded. The order maintained by the visitors has been remarkably good, and has almost uniformly given evidence of an appreciation of the right uses of the park. There has been very little trespassing on the turf or planting spaces, and as a fact of great encouragement, it is of interest to know that it has not been observed that a single flower of the many blossoms which have brightened the field has been plucked by visitors. Of no other public ground in Cambridge, however long established, can this be said.

One policeman in uniform, detailed by the Police Department, has patrolled the field during the evenings and Sundays. In all, there have been four arrests for "disturbing the peace," and one for drunkenness. These arrests were all made at nearly the same time, the offenders being young men who evidently entirely misunderstood the purpose for which the field was built. They were all fined in the district police court, and the effect has been that since that event there has been no further exhibition of rowdyism upon the field.

#### BROADWAY PARK.

On May 8, the order transferring Broadway Common to the control of the Park Commissioners was approved by the Mayor, and this Department began the work of reconstruction immediately. It being difficult to obtain loam in large quantities at reasonable prices, the work progressed slowly, with only a small number of laborers employed. The public were not deprived of the grass spaces during the warm season, the work being so arranged that the centre of the field was not disturbed. A new flagstaff has been set up. The water pipes have been laid. The two south plats have been finished, the surfaces sodded and the shrubs planted. A number of superfluous trees have been cut down, and three trees of considerable size have been transplanted, with conditions favorable for future growth. A new iron fence has been set up on the west boundary line. Work will begin again upon this reservation as soon as the frost is out of the

ground in the spring, and will be pushed as fast as material can be secured.

Many favorable comments from residents in this vicinity have been made upon the plans of the landscape architects, as they have been explained, and as the work of reconstruction progressed throughout the season.

#### RIVER PARKWAY.

For purposes of construction, the River Parkway has been divided into sections, as follows:—

- Section A. From West Boston Bridge to land of Charles River Embankment Company.
- Section B. Fronting land of Charles River Embankment Company.
- Section C. From land of Charles River Embankment Company to Brookline Bridge.
- Section D. From and including Brookline Bridge to River street.
- Section E. From and including River street to and including Western avenue.
- Section F. From Western avenue to Boylston street wall.
- Section G. From and including Boylston street wall to and including Scorgie street.

Filling material has been placed on three sections during the past year, the amount expended for such material upon each section being as follows:—

Section D. (Captain's Island ),	\$1,897 13
Section F. (Winthrop's Wharf and adjacent lands),	2,636 87
Section G. (Boylston street, Murray street, and Mt. Auburn street),	781 41
Total for the year,	<hr/> \$5,315 41

A road has been built across the marsh land from the foot of Magazine street to Brookline street. Another road has been built from Murray street, up the river to the gas-house wharf. An effort has been made to keep the banks of the river clean, and much unsightly matter has been removed. A number of buildings upon the park lands have been torn down.

## THE FRONT.

The East Cambridge Embankment, known tentatively as "The Front," has been a dumping ground for teams since July 31. Tickets have been issued, each ticket representing a double load of solid filling. To date, the number of loads received is 15,132.

## THE PUBLIC GROUNDS.

Of the \$8,500 appropriated this year for "Shade Trees and Public Grounds," about \$4,000 have been expended in the maintenance of the Public Grounds. The remainder of the appropriation has been used in the construction of the Morse Schoolhouse grounds, and upon the shade trees. This makes an average of about \$266 per acre for the annual maintenance of the Public Grounds. When the results accomplished by this expenditure are considered, this is not an economical showing. There has been no expense for the maintenance of buildings, no large amounts have been expended for bedding plants, and no police service has been charged to this account. The work has been carefully studied and vigorously pushed, and yet, owing to conditions which the Department has not yet been able to change, the expense of maintenance has been greater than the area and the kind of work performed justifies in the light of what may be done in modern parks. It is expected that the same amount of gardening work upon Cambridge Field will cost much less per acre. The way to economy in maintenance in the old public grounds lies in reconstruction.

No one, probably, would wish to see these grounds less carefully cultivated than they have been the past season, and yet it does not appear to be possible to maintain even this standard, under present conditions, for less than the sum expended this year.

## CAMBRIDGE COMMON.

As other areas in the city, illustrating the art of modern park construction, are completed, the public will be more and more dissatisfied with the present condition of Cambridge Common. The extravagant waste of area will not be tolerated when it is generally understood that every square foot of



park land has some one highest use, that any other use is a partial waste, and no use at all is a total waste of opportunity. Park lands, like trust funds, should be well invested. Public money lying idle or drawing a low rate of interest when it might be invested to better advantage, is no more a waste of public property than are park areas which are not fulfilling the full use of which they are capable.

A momentary comparison of Cambridge Common with Cambridge Field will illustrate the difference between a public reservation of land improved upon no particular plan and having no special purpose, and a reservation improved upon the most careful plan. Under the skilful planning of our advisory architects, every square foot of Cambridge Field is developed to something near its full park value. Taking into consideration the requirements of the community of which Cambridge Field is the centre, the plan provides (as nearly as the art of modern park construction can provide) for the greatest possible good to the greatest possible number. The recreative needs of all ages and both sexes are met, as are the varied needs of each age and sex. The treatment of the park so that natural beauty may be enjoyed has not been neglected, but its æsthetic treatment has not been such as to interfere with its use as a playground and sporting field, both in winter and in summer. The special needs of little children have been provided for, as have also the recreative needs of growing girls. Ample provisions have been made for the robust sports of boys and men, and all these needs are so met that no one conflicts with another, and all of them are removed from that portion of the field where older people may enjoy the soberer pleasures found in strolling and sitting in the open air amidst landscape features formed upon true artistic principles.

In a plan so orderly, it will not be difficult to enforce orderly conduct. No visitor can fail to be impressed with the fact that Order is the park's first law.

Upon Cambridge Common, under present conditions, the greatest good to the greatest number is not secured. A very small minority only of all the population which need this recreative space, are permitted to enjoy it. For at least one

half of the out-door season each year, nearly or quite the entire area is monopolized by unrestrained boys and men who practise their sports to the exclusion of all other people. Little children are driven away. Older people, especially women, are prevented from using many of the paths, or do so at a risk of bodily harm from a "fly ball" or a "flying wedge." The rights of the public who desire to enjoy finely-kept public lawns and beautiful plantations are also denied, for it is not possible to keep the Common in a good state of cultivation, when football teams roam at will over the entire area.

That a high state of cultivation of grass, trees, and shrubs should be maintained in at least a part of Cambridge Common is very evident. Here, in the Soldiers' Monument, we have the most ambitious piece of sculptural architecture in the city. The artistic treatment of the immediate grounds should be in harmony with the formal design of this monument. The lawns of the private estates which partially surround the Common are of a character which call for equally careful cultivation of this reservation.

In other words, Cambridge Common should be devoted to the common park uses of all the people. The entire area should be parked, according to a plan which would develop all its now latent possibilities for recreation. In bringing this about, none of the old traditions of this sacred field need be violated. The treatment of the Common so as to preserve and emphasize its historical importance would be one of the tasks of the architect, and one for which the advisory architects of this department are specially qualified.

It is not here contended that this historic piece of Massachusetts land, so dear to the heart of every lover of the old Commonwealth, should be dressed in the Italian, or French, or any similar style of landscape gardening. Native trees and shrubs, arranged naturally, should be used in the plantings, and if the flora of Massachusetts were used exclusively the effect would be not without much beauty and variety, the plan would have the merit of novelty, and its educational advantage in affording a field for botanical study to our many school chil-

dren who now have little opportunity to learn of the wealth of woods and fields, would be of much value.

If, ever since and before the day of Governor Gage, Cambridge boys have played here as upon Boston Common, there need be no tyrannical seizure of their playground now. A ball-field, better equipped for the game than past generations of Cambridge boys ever dreamed of, might be provided in the new plan, and yet leave acres for the enjoyment in other ways of the great majority of the people.

And so all the worthy traditions of the past might be preserved, while the full park value of the land for this and future generations are secured.

The cost of these improvements should be the least objection against the plan. Upon no other spot in Cambridge can a modern park be built so cheaply. The expense would not exceed 5 cents per square foot, and the work would naturally be extended over several years, so as not to disturb the land too much any one season.

This discussion of the needs of Cambridge Common is here introduced because the work of the Department for the past two seasons has demonstrated how necessary it is to work by final plans if proper economy is to be observed. Considerable work is now done each year in the way of repairs. Much of this would be unnecessary if clearly-defined plans for the treatment of the Common were adopted. Some trees should be removed, and young trees should be planted; the triangular plat at the corner of Garden and Waterhouse streets should be treated in some proper manner; many of the gravel walks need to be raised and resurfaced. Even if the work of reconstructing the Common were not seriously entered upon for several years, this incidental work of each season should be done with reference to a final plan.

During the past year the new forty-inch water main has been laid across the Common, and much additional gardening work was thereby necessitated. Care was taken with the exposed roots of the trees and it is hoped that no serious damage was done. The gun carriages for the three cannon became unsafe and new ones were built at an expense of \$107.



## FORT WASHINGTON.

This reservation is not under cultivation. An occasional raking of the ground is about all that the department has been able to do with the means at its disposal.

The flagstaff has been repainted. The cannon should be remounted and the iron fence repaired. There is no police patrol upon this ground, and the present generation of youth has never been restrained in any use they might wish to make of the place.

## TRIANGLE ON RIVER STREET.

The small "Common" at the junction of Pleasant and River streets has hitherto been neglected. A sum, approximating \$350.00, was this year used from the regular appropriation for Public Grounds in the improvement of this place. A neat and durable artificial stone coping was built on the sidewalk line and the space within filled with loam, and sodded. Many favorable comments have been made by citizens upon this improvement.

This small triangular piece of turf, surrounded by streets, suggests the possibility of similar spots in other parts of the city. Thus a space considerably larger in area might be treated in Kendall Square, near West Boston Bridge, and also one in Lechmere Square, near Craigie Bridge. These bits of refreshing green would not encroach upon the proper width of the roadways, and they would cost but little more to maintain than do the pavements now existing. They would do much to make attractive two approaches to the city now wholly unattractive. If tree foliage were added to screen teamsters and horses from the summer sun while watering at the fountains, giving a moment's refreshment in the day's toil, the idea underlying all park development would be greatly served thereby.

## SCHOOLHOUSE GROUNDS.

There are few schoolhouse lots in the city so contracted that it would not be possible to establish in them school-gardens. In these gardens a tree or two, a bit of green turf and a few carefully labelled shrubs would not only exert a softening and civilizing influence upon the school children, but

might be made to play an important part in the educational system of the city. "The youngest school boy is old enough to find the study of the school-garden the most absorbing of all his occupations." Here an early love of nature may be implanted which will make lasting impressions upon the future life of the citizen. In the report of last year I alluded to the influence which cultivated schoolhouse grounds might have upon the park manners of the youth of the city. The problem of park development seems to include not only the preparation of parks for the people, but also in some measure, at least, the preparation of the people for the parks.

During the year the Morse Schoolhouse grounds have been finished, at an approximate cost of \$1,000. An artificial stone coping was built upon Brookline and Allston streets, a wide brick walk laid to the boys' entrance, and a gravelled driveway extended to the rear of the building. The lawn has been loamed and graded and the edges sodded. Three shade trees have been planted upon the lawn. In the rear, a screen of Lombardy poplars separates the grounds from the neighboring property. Small plantations of shrubbery have been placed at appropriate points and care has been taken in making up the assortment of shrubs to include many natives of New England. These have been plainly labelled, so that the children may read them.

The interest which the teachers and pupils of the Morse School have shown in the improvement of the grounds is the best evidence of the value of this kind of work. At the planting of the shade trees, the children were assembled by the principal and appropriate exercises were held. Throughout the season the young grass has been jealously guarded by the children, and although no fence protects the lawn from the streets, and previously the ground was used as a common passageway by the general public, there is now no private lawn in the city more carefully preserved.

Work of a similar character has also been done this year upon the grounds of the Sleeper Schoolhouse in North Cambridge. Here \$819.10 have been expended by this department, the amount having been set aside for the purpose by

the Superintendent of Public Buildings from the original appropriation for the building. Of this amount, \$455.70 was expended for iron and wooden fencing. Gravel and brick walks have been laid, the lawn loamed and graded, and shrubberies planted. An open iron fence protects the lawn from the streets.

The Superintendent of Public Buildings announces that he intends to place the work of surfacing the grounds of the new buildings under the care of this department, and estimates for this purpose are now included in the appropriations for all new buildings. Under this arrangement, at least four lots will be ready for treatment the coming season.

#### PUBLIC SHADE TREES.

Work upon the public shade trees has proceeded haltingly throughout the year, because of inadequate means at the disposal of the department. In my report of last year the needs of this branch of the work were discussed at considerable length, and many necessary features in shade-tree culture pointed out. A large amount of work, when compared with former years, has been done, but much that is necessary is left undone. Our citizens rejoice in the large amount of foliage which screens the city from the summer sun, and makes beautiful our streets; but a critical examination of our trees reveals the fact that the city is going backward in the matter of tree culture. Last year I reported: "Let the tendency which has been growing for the last decade continue but for a few years longer, and Cambridge, from being a city noted for her abundance and beauty of foliage, will descend to the list of nearly barren cities." If this deterioration has been checked at all during the year just closed, the check has been so slight as to give little satisfaction to tree lovers. It is true that, as in the case of 1894, more trees have been planted upon the public streets in 1895 than have been cut down; but this fact is not the whole story. The work of destruction from many causes is going on, and decay is no less sure because slow and silent.

While the benefits to a city from shade trees upon the highways greatly overbalance the inconveniences, it is yet a fact

that the trees are in many cases an inconvenience to the neighboring properties.

Most of these inconveniences are comparatively unimportant and can be remedied by a little careful trimming of the branches. Requests for trimming are constantly coming to this office, and the citizens making these requests have a right to have their cases attended to without delay. But this the department, owing to an inadequate appropriation, has not been able at all times to do, and it has been found necessary to discriminate in favor of what seemed the most pressing cases. From one cause and another, trimming must go on throughout the whole year, if the rights and convenience of neighboring property owners are to be duly attended to. A party of tree men should thus be employed the whole time, but the department has been able so far to do only occasional work upon the trees. More thoroughly organized work would greatly reduce the cost per tree. Twice the amount of money expended this year would enable the department to do three times the amount of work.

The ravages of the white-marked tussock moth (*Orgyia leucostigma*) have been less serious this year than last, showing the good results of last year's work upon the trees. No new territory, to any extent, has been infested this year. In some of the sections infested last year, however, the *larvae* have again been very active, and many trees, especially horse-chestnuts, were completely defoliated in mid-season. In not a few cases the cause of this reappearance of the pest after the thorough cleaning of a year ago could be traced directly to single trees (generally horse-chestnuts) growing upon private lawns, which had not been cleaned. It is necessary, therefore, to continually call the attention of householders to the necessity of co-operating with the city in the work of exterminating, if possible, this moth. A single horse-chestnut tree, if left unguarded, will harbor enough eggs of the *Orgyia* through the winter to defoliate a large section of trees next spring.

The work of cleaning the eggs from the public trees this year extended through the month of October. The number of trees cleaned was 1,091, and were upon the following



streets: Washington, Norfolk, Tremont, Hampshire, Moore, Clark, Windsor, Cherry, School, Broadway, Harvard, Market, Union, Lincoln, Columbia, Douglas, Magazine, Dana Square, Lawrence, Lake, Park, Fairmont, Erie, Elm, Prospect, Pleasant, Franklin, Auburn, Salem, Williams, Cottage, Upton, Perry, and Broadway Park.

The number of young trees planted upon the public streets during the year is 249. The number of trees removed is 98. The work of placing wire guards around the trees to prevent horse gnawing has been continued throughout the year.

The new Aberdeen avenue will be ready for tree-planting next spring, and the opportunity for good work upon this broad thoroughfare should not be neglected.

#### THE WASHINGTON ELM.

The new forty-inch water main came within sixteen feet of the line of the trunk of the Washington Elm. But few small roots were exposed, and great care was taken to save them from harm. The opportunity to renew the soil, afforded by the excavation, was improved, and a quantity of fresh loam was placed in the hole. A gas pipe being found in dangerous proximity to the roots, the gas company removed it and substituted a new one farther away.

Never before in a single year has the tree been visited by so many strangers. The two great national conventions, held in Boston this summer, brought many thousand people to Cambridge who eagerly inquired for and reverently viewed this most famous tree in America. The smallest particle of bark or a single leaf was carefully treasured by these "pilgrims," and carried to all parts of the country and to England. On both occasions the tree was decorated, and the crowds who gathered around it were addressed by leading Cambridge citizens. Probably the citizens of Cambridge realize now, as never before, the value of this relic.

Respectfully submitted,

GEORGE R. COOK,

*General Superintendent of Parks.*



# REPORT

## OF THE

# LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS.

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HENRY D. YERXA, Esq.,

*Chairman of the Park Commission, Cambridge, Mass.*

Sir: — We beg leave to make the following report, covering the year which is now closing:—

For The Front and Rindge Field no designs, other than sketches of a preliminary sort, have as yet been studied. For Broadway Square and Cambridge Field general plans were prepared last year, and these were published in last year's report. The work of construction in accordance with the plans has made good progress at both places during the present year. Besides occasional visits of inspection, a few changes and improvements in detail have been made in the working drawings and grading plans as occasion has arisen. Planting plans have also been prepared, the plants required by the plans have been ordered, and the bills of the nurserymen have been duly audited.

In early summer, when a proposal was made that an existing opening in the fence of Broadway Square should be permitted to be continued, we felt obliged to point out that if this gate were kept open, the Square could neither be so useful as a recreation ground nor so pleasing in appearance as it might be if the gate were permanently closed in accordance with the adopted and published plan. On this subject we wrote as follows, under date of June 20, 1895:—

“The experience of cities has long since proved that it is necessary to fence public grounds of small area in order to

prevent the trampling of short-cut paths across the grounds in all directions. A fence having been provided in order to preserve some untrodden breadths of greensward within a square, gates are to be opened only at such points as may accommodate the majority of people desiring to take pleasure in the square, or to cross it on their way to distant points. Every gate or opening in the boundary fence almost necessarily involves a path to every other gate or opening. The greater the number of gates the more a square must tend to resemble the trodden desert which is the normal condition of open grounds in crowded neighborhoods when they are unprotected by fencing.

“The plan for Broadway Square, submitted by us and adopted by the Commission, will preserve considerable areas of lawn free from cross-walks. It will also set off a section of the land near Broadway where the children of the neighborhood may find a place to play in an arbor out of the line of march of persons who may use the Square for short cuts. The scheme presented will in this way make a particularly useful as well as attractive piece of public ground. This special usefulness and attractiveness will be chiefly due to the simple expedient of closing the middle gate on Broadway. If the gate must be kept open, no such design as we have laid before you ought to be followed. The opening of the middle gate would make a wholly different plan of treatment advisable, and this new plan would not develop for the neighborhood the usefulness and the attractiveness which the present plan will produce. We are distinctly of the opinion that the neighborhood can well afford to forego the use of the middle gate and its accompanying diagonal cross-walks, for the sake of the far greater pleasantness, beauty and usefulness which the plan you have before you will secure.”

Another and more important problem has also been given close attention, namely, the question of a central building at Cambridge Field. On February 23rd, 1895, we wrote as follows:

“It is important that when the Field is opened to the public, it should at once become a success such as will induce



respect for it and will help the formation of good habits in the people who will frequent the place. Experience proves that when such a ground is finished in a poor or makeshift manner, the public is very apt to abuse it; while if the finish is good and the arrangements ample and attractive, improved behavior follows. The recent World's Fair illustrated this principle very forcibly.

“The building proposed by our plan is the keystone of the design for Cambridge Field, and ought to be well devised by a good architect with special reference to producing a pleasing result. It should be planned to serve as a central hall or meeting-place and as a shelter from showers; to it should be attached the band stand; within it should be found a check room for the deposit of clothing, bats and balls, skates or other articles; also, a counter for the sale of milk, beef tea, coffee, soda or light refreshments; also the necessary closets and wash-rooms.

“Strange as it may appear at first sight, we believe that after such a building is once built, the annual cost of maintaining the whole field, building and all, will be no greater than it would be were no such building erected. The granting of a privilege to sell refreshments, to maintain a stand for sharpening skates, and for the sale of skates and other instruments of games, would probably induce some worthy person to take the position of care-taker without other pay, or for a very small pay. A man and woman with a boy or girl would be a sufficient staff at first. The man would have general charge of the field and house, and would work about the place much of the time. The woman, assisted by a child, would attend the check and refreshment counters meanwhile.

“At the Overlook Shelter, in Franklin Park, the man who has the privilege of selling refreshments supplies all the janitor service required, including supplies of soap and towels. The Commission receives no rent from him; but, on the other hand, the Commission is at no expense whatever for maintaining a very important and successful adjunct of the park.

“We believe the Cambridge Park Commission would do well to make a similarly well-managed building the central

feature of Cambridge Field. With the building, and a good man in charge, the enterprise can almost certainly be made successful from the start."

On April 8, 1895, we wrote further:—

"As argued in our previous letter, the proposed building seems to us very desirable. It is indeed entirely practicable to open the field to the public without any building other than the necessary closets, which might be placed within the shrub enclosures shown on our plan. On the other hand, the proposed house will so enhance the value of the field for all who may frequent it, and particularly for women, children and babies, that we cannot but think it will much more than repay its first cost. As to the recurring cost of maintenance, it was explained in our former note that this expense is likely to be little, if any, larger with the building than without it.

"Believing as we do in the great practical usefulness and value of the proposed building, we have, as you know, made it the central and dominating feature of our design for the whole Field. In rural parks, buildings are rightly kept subordinate to the scenery; and to this end they are often given picturesque forms, such as blend easily with foliage. In such parks buildings are best when half concealed or even hidden.

"In a confined, level, formal and generally rectilinear public ground, like Cambridge Field, buildings should certainly, so it seems to us, both stand forth openly and possess a dignified architectural character. A rural cottage would be as incongruous in a formal square, as a classic mansion would be in a rough New England pasture. If, therefore, the Commission cannot afford at this time to set up an appropriately substantial and architectural structure, we would suggest that building be for the present postponed. The site allotted to the building on the plan may be kept open, and the two necessary but temporary small closet buildings may be conveniently placed in the spaces which are marked on the plan as intended for the children's and girls' playgrounds. We are quite sure that this course will prove wiser than would the immediate construction of any building which would not correspond in style and appearance, as well as in use and convenience, with the general plan for the Field."

The Commission having since determined to build, we have had numerous consultations with the architects, Messrs. Andrew, Jaques & Rantoul, whose plans and designs for the Field House will, we suppose, be published with the Commissioners' annual report.

In respect to the most important and costly work undertaken by the Commission — the North Charlesbank road as it may perhaps be named — we can report good progress towards a satisfactory general plan of development, although no working plans have yet been called for. As was remarked last year, the treatment of the spaces of varying width which will generally remain between the proposed road and the river cannot wisely be determined until the question of the Charles River dam is answered. If the dam is built, the tide excluded, and the fresh water kept at a fairly constant level, these spaces can be pleasingly and usefully developed at comparatively little expense. If the dam cannot be obtained, the mud-banks will have to be walled and rip-rapped or beached at great expense, and the marshes filled as well. On the other hand, the construction of the continuous sidewalk, planting strip and driveway of the road itself need not be delayed any longer than is necessary to settle the various questions of new bridges, new connecting streets, and new widenings of streets which have already arisen, or which can be foreseen. In company with the City Engineer of Boston we have long advocated the abandonment of the present highway bridge at Cottage Farm and the building of two bridges in place thereof, one to connect Magazine street, Cambridge, with Pleasant street, Brookline, and one to connect Cambridgeport with Boston at St. Mary's street. This latter bridge will make direct connection between the parkways of Cambridge and Boston by way of Audubon road, which joins the Boston parkway at Brookline avenue. This last-mentioned bridge will also mark, in a suitably architectural manner, the upper or inland end of the broad Charles River Basin, and the mouth of the narrow channel of Charles River, properly so-called. Until these bridges and the grades of their approaches are determined upon, it will obviously not be worth while to attempt the detailed planning of the North Charlesbank road in their neighborhood.



One section of the proposed river road, namely, that from Boylston street to the Cambridge Hospital, it appears to be safe to construct at an early day, since it is not likely to be troubled by any new streets or bridges. Accordingly a general plan or design for this section has been prepared. It has been assumed that Boylston street will be widened on its western side, and that the new bridge of the future will be built on the axis of the street as so widened. Spreading wing walls have been planned to spring symmetrically from the abutments of this bridge, supporting level triangular spaces from which views up and down the river will be advantageously obtained. Upon leaving Boylston street the road itself is designed to be subdivided as follows:—a sidewalk adjacent to the private lands fifteen feet wide, a planting space seven and one half feet, a driveway forty feet wide, another planting space seven and one half feet, and a promenade twenty feet. Where the road, as thus designed, touches Mt. Auburn street, the northerly sidewalk of the latter street takes the place of the parkway sidewalk, but the driveway and the promenade are intended to continue on the south side of the electric car tracks at their full widths, so that pleasure driving and walking may be as little as possible discommoded by cars and traffic. West of the end of Sparks street the road is planned to curve away from Mt. Auburn street by a line which, when continued across the river frontage of the Hospital lands, will connect satisfactorily with whatever river-roads the Metropolitan Park Commission may hereafter construct in the reservation which it controls between the Hospital, the Cambridge Cemetery and the United States Arsenal.

From Boylston street to Murray street, and as far again to the westward, the road, of the full width of ninety feet as above described, can at any time be constructed by filling on the existing marsh. At a point about five hundred feet west of Murray street the filling material will, however, begin to encroach upon the present water surface of the river; and when the Gas Company's wharf is reached, the slope of the filling will extend into the river beyond the Harbor Commis-



sioners' line, unless it is retained just within the line by a "sea wall." From the old gas wharf to the Cambridge Hospital the inland boundary of the land controlled by the Park Commission is so near the Harbor Commissioners' line that a continuous "sea wall" will be necessary if the road is to be constructed to the full width above suggested. The line of wall ought, of course, to be strictly parallel to the long concave curve by which the road is planned to approach Mt. Auburn street and swing away from it again. As the proposed curve conforms very closely to the natural bend of the river at this place, it may be safely assumed that the slight overstepping of the now angular Commissioners' line will be assented to by the state and national authorities concerned.

Only one other word remains to be said concerning this important section of the North Charlesbank road; namely, that, if the river were to-day the level fresh-water stream which the proposed dam would make it, no such long and necessarily expensive wall as has just been described would be required. If the dam were already built, the whole of the concave side of the Mt. Auburn street bend of Charles River might be beached, or banked with shrubbery. It might be beached instead of walled to-day, without the dam, if the controlling authorities and the proprietors of the marshes on the south side of the bend would consent to a shifting of the Commissioners' lines one hundred and twenty feet to the southward. Such beaching, even with the accompanying shifting of the channel, would cost less than the proposed wall; so that it may be well to ascertain whether the necessary assents may or may not be obtainable. On the other hand, it must be noted that, however unnecessary the wall might be should construction be postponed until the dam is built, if the wall is built to-day to meet present requirements, it will still form an entirely suitable and not unsightly river margin when the unvarying water surface shall be obtained. The shore of the so-called Lagoon in the park of the recent World's Fair at Chicago was composed, where nothing hindered, of reedy and bushy banks; where roads were forced to come close to the water they were supported by low walls built just in the rear of the irregular

fringe of shore plants; where bridges were approached or boat-landings were required, the walls pressed forward to the water's edge. The ten miles of the two banks of Charles River above Cottage Farms, now controlled by the Cambridge and Metropolitan Park Commissions and certain semi-public institutions, can likewise be made variously picturesque as well as useful, when once the invading tides have been excluded by a dam. Respectfully submitted,

OLMSTED, OLMSTED & ELIOT.

BROOKLINE, Nov. 30, 1895.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE — PARK DEPT.

Plan showing location of

# SEA WALL AT THE FRONT

1898.

*L. M. H. H. H.*

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

CITY ENGINEER.

VINE ST.

FIRST

CHARLES ST.

BENT ST.

ROGERS ST.

BINNEY ST.

COMMERCIAL AVE.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
PARK "THE FRONT"

SEA WALL

MASS. COMMISSIONERS OF THE LANDS

1898

C H A R L E S

R I V E R

BRIDGE ST.

PRISON POINT

DESIGNED CANAL

CANAL OR DOCK



# REPORT

OF THE

## CITY ENGINEER.

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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE. }  
OFFICE OF CITY ENGINEER. }  
CITY HALL, December 1, 1895. }

*Henry D. Yerxa, Esq., President of Park Commission.*

DEAR SIR:—The engineering work of the past season done in connection with the Park Department may be roughly classified as follows:—

First:—On the River Front. Much work has been done in completing the surveys of the lands on the river, locating the Park line on the ground, and preparing plans on a large scale with special reference to settlements to be made for lands taken. Numerous soundings have also been made on the flats adjoining the Park lands, preparatory to the work of filling and completing the River Drive and Parkway.

Second:—At the Cambridge Field. A very large amount of time has been given to setting out the work of grading and finishing this park. A sewer was constructed, connecting with the Cambridge street sewer, and a complete system of water pipes laid for sprinkling and flooding purposes.

Third:—At the Broadway Square. This square has been entirely re-surfaced and the location of paths, trees, etc., radically changed.

Fourth:—Rindge Field. A sewer connecting with the Railroad street sewer has been constructed for surface drainage and the grounds enclosed with a suitable fence.

Fifth:—At “The Front.” The most important engineering work of the year has been the construction of a sea wall enclosing on two sides the area to be known as “The Front.” Owing to the unfavorable conditions a somewhat expensive and novel foundation was adopted. The surface of the flats on which this wall is located varied from an elevation at about mean low water to a grade of about eight feet below mean low water. Below this surface lay a sheet of mud about six feet in thickness. The material below the mud was fine, compact sand, so that the bottom of the wall was at some parts fourteen feet above any material suitable to found a wall upon. The foundation thus became a very important and expensive part of the work. The construction adopted to meet this condition may be seen from an examination of plates accompanying.

A continuous line of hard pine timber six inches in thickness is driven near the front or toe of the wall and strongly bolted to timber caps. This is to assist in carrying the weight of the wall and to retain the mud and filling material behind the wall in place. This is reinforced by a row of large inclined or spur piles at the front to keep the wall from being forced forward into the river by the action of the filling behind. The rest of the wall is carried on three lines of piles, spaced two feet six inches apart. The spaces between and around these piles are filled with clean, coarse gravel. Many of the spur piles are forty-five feet in length. All are driven by powerful hammers to a firm and solid bearing. These piles are cut off at mean low water and covered with a heavy timber platform on which the wall itself rests.

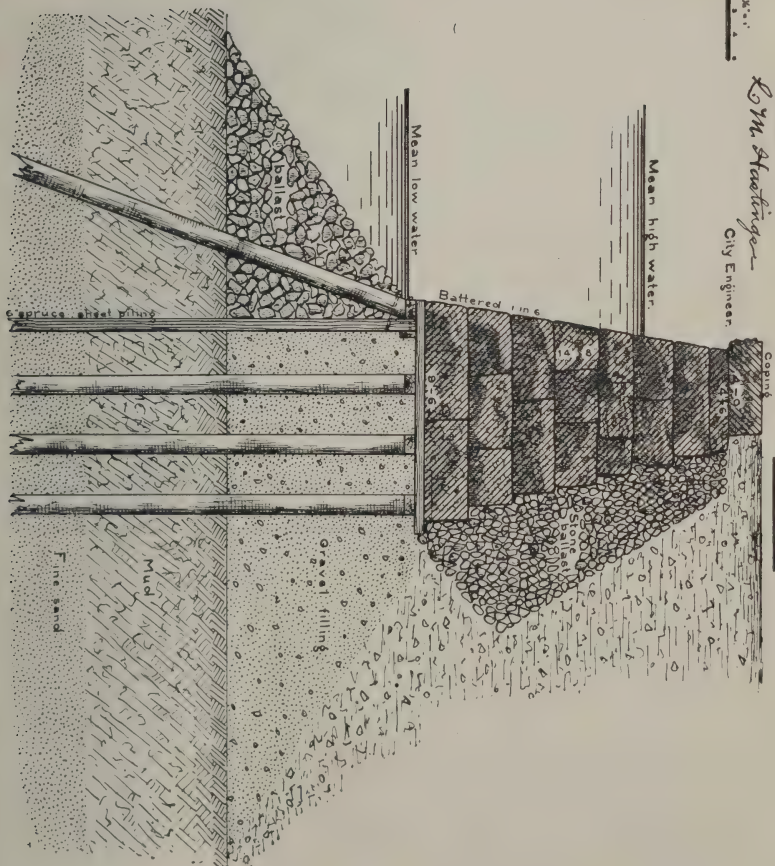
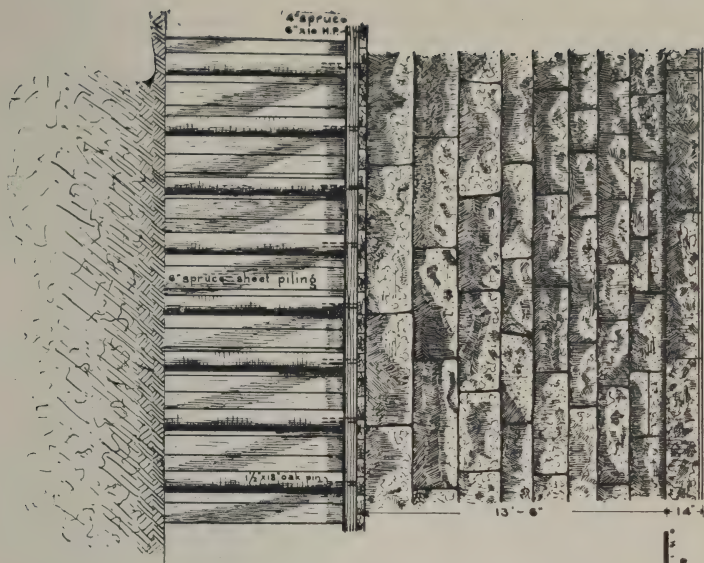
The wall is of a high grade of rubble granite masonry, surmounted with a heavy granite cap or coping. Behind the wall it is proposed to place, as the filling proceeds, stone or other ballast to prevent washing of the filling through the wall. It will also be best to place ballast in front of the foundation at the deeper portions to further increase its stability.

Where Commercial avenue crosses the wall, the coping was omitted, and provision made to receive the end of the bridge

Elevation of Wall.

Edm Stautinger

City Engineer







which is proposed to be constructed over the dock or canal at that point.

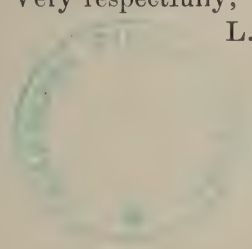
It was intended to construct the wall in a straight line on the dock or canal, making it 100 feet in width, but the Board of Harbor and Land Commissioners required a width between the enclosing walls of 125 feet. As it was necessary to enclose the work at the sewer in Commercial avenue with the wall, the original line was kept at the crossing of the street, and the wall was brought back by a curve to meet the line required by the Harbor and Land Commissioners.

The total length of wall will be about 1,750 feet. The wall and foundations, now nearly completed, have been built by Thomas A. Rowe, under a contract dated May 8, 1895, at a price of \$29.19 per lineal foot of completed wall. This price does not include the cost of the gravel filling. On this contract there have been made to date, payments amounting to \$39,034.53.

There have been employed on the Park Department work during the year, five assistants and one inspector. The amount charged to Park Department Engineering during the year is \$2,694.77.

Very respectfully,

L. M. HASTINGS,  
*City Engineer.*



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